

A resolution (S. Res. 122) designating April 30, 2009, as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans," and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 122) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 122

Whereas many nations throughout the world, and especially within the Western hemisphere, celebrate "Día de los Niños", or "Day of the Children", on the 30th of April, in recognition and celebration of their country's future—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States and are the center of American families;

Whereas children should be nurtured and invested in to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the American spirit;

Whereas according to the latest Census report, there are more than 44,000,000 individuals of Hispanic descent living in the United States, nearly 15,000,000 of whom are children;

Whereas Hispanics in the United States, the youngest and fastest growing ethnic community in the Nation, continue the tradition of honoring their children on Día de los Niños, and wish to share this custom with the rest of the Nation;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and we rely on children to pass on these family values, morals, and culture to future generations;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education are most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members and that encourage children to explore and develop confidence;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm for the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their future, to articulate their aspirations, and to find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the Nation to declare April 30 as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans", a day to bring together Hispanics and other communities nationwide to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the children of a nation are the responsibility of all its people, and people should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2009, as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans"; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the Nation to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center around children, and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all our people;

(B) are positive and uplifting and that help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about one another's cultures and to share ideas;

(D) include all members of the family, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within a family, enabling children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of their elderly family members;

(E) provide opportunities for families within a community to get acquainted; and

(F) provide children with the support they need to develop skills and confidence, and to find the inner strength and the will and fire of the human spirit to make their dreams come true.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES DAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 123, which was introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 123) expressing support for designation of May 2, 2009, as "Vietnamese Refugees Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 123) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 123

Whereas the Library of Congress' Asian Division together with many Vietnamese-American organizations across the United States will sponsor a "Journey to Freedom: A Boat People Retrospective" symposium on May 2, 2009;

Whereas Vietnamese refugees were asylum-seekers from Communist-controlled Vietnam;

Whereas many Vietnamese escaped in boats during the late 1970s, after the Vietnam War and by land across the Cambodian, Laotian, and Thai borders into refugee camps in Thailand;

Whereas over 2,000,000 Vietnamese boat people and other refugees are now spread across the world, in the United States, Australia, Canada, France, England, Germany, China, Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, the Philippines, and other nations;

Whereas over half of all overseas Vietnamese are Vietnamese-Americans, and Vi-

etnamese-Americans are the fourth-largest Asian American group in the United States;

Whereas, as of 2006, 72 percent of Vietnamese-Americans were naturalized United States citizens, the highest rate among all Asian groups;

Whereas Vietnamese-Americans have made significant contributions to the rich culture and economic prosperity of the United States;

Whereas Vietnamese-Americans have distinguished themselves in the fields of literature, the arts, science, and athletics, and include actors and actresses, physicists, an astronaut, and Olympic athletes; and

Whereas May 2, 2009, would be an appropriate day to designate as "Vietnamese Refugees Day": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the designation of "Vietnamese Refugees Day" in order to commemorate the arrival of Vietnamese refugees in the United States, to document their harrowing experiences, and subsequent achievements in their new homeland, to honor the host countries that welcomed the boat people, and to recognize the voluntary agencies and nongovernmental organizations that facilitated their resettlement, adjustment, and assimilation into mainstream society in the United States.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 124, which was introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 124) recognizing the threats to press freedom and expression around the world and reaffirming press freedom as a priority in the efforts of the United States to promote democracy and good governance, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2009.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on May 3, people from across the country and around the world will celebrate World Press Freedom Day—a time to commemorate and honor the principles of freedom of expression. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, World Press Freedom Day provides an important opportunity for us all to remember the journalists and other members of the news media—of all nationalities—who have sacrificed their personal safety, and in some cases their lives, to ensure the free flow of information to the public.

Charles Caleb Colton said that "Despotism can no more exist in a nation until the liberty of the press be destroyed, than night can happen before the sun is set." According to the International Federation of Journalists, at least 109 journalists and other members of the media have been killed in the line of duty during 2008. Countless others have been arrested and/or detained simply for performing their professional duties. Our Founders prized and protected freedom of the press in our national charter, the Constitution.

Courageous American journalists have documented volatile turning points in our history—and the world's history—and some have suffered or even died for their efforts, beginning with America's first martyr to press freedom, Elijah Lovejoy.

Recently, we witnessed the troubling case of Iranian-American journalist Roxana Saberi, who was arrested by Iranian authorities in January for buying a bottle of wine and was later tried behind closed doors and detained on absurd and unfounded charges of espionage. Two other American journalists—Laura Ling and Euna Lee—were detained by North Korean officials last month, while working on a story about the plight of female Chinese refugees living along the Chinese border. These troubling events are just two examples of the growing threat facing journalists around the world.

Preserving press freedoms and freedom of expression is one of my highest priorities as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee. That is why I am pleased to join Senators FEINGOLD, KAUFMAN and LUGAR in cosponsoring a resolution in honor of World Press Freedom Day.

Next week, the Judiciary Committee will consider legislation that I introduced and that is cosponsored by Senators KENNEDY, SPECTER, FEINGOLD, WHITEHOUSE, MCCASKILL and TESTER to roll back the government's excessive use of the state secrets privilege to shield government information. The State Secrets Protection Act, S. 417, will help guide the Federal courts to balance the government's legitimate interests in protecting national security, with accountability and the rights of citizens to obtain government information and seek judicial redress.

The committee also has on its agenda long-overdue legislation to establish a qualified privilege for journalists to protect the confidentiality of their sources and the public's right to know—the Free Flow of Information Act, S. 448 and H.R. 985. Last year, the Senate Judiciary Committee favorably reported a similar measure that I cosponsored with Senators LUGAR, DODD, SPECTER, SCHUMER, and GRAHAM, with a strong, bipartisan 15 to 4 vote.

I am very pleased that President Obama has stated his support of Federal shield legislation, and that Attorney General Eric Holder has also expressed his support of a carefully crafted federal shield law. At my request, the Obama administration is working closely with the committee to help reach consensus on a meaningful Federal shield bill that we can enact this year.

As we celebrate World Press Freedom Day, we are reminded that an open and accountable society comes with the

duty of its citizens to seek out the truth and to empower themselves with that knowledge. All of us—whether Republican, Democrat or Independent—have an interest in preserving press freedoms and protecting the public's right to know. Enacting the State Secrets Protection Act and the Free Flow of Information Act will send a powerful signal to the entire world about this Nation's commitment to freedom of expression. For this reason, I strongly encourage all Members to join me in supporting the resolution in honor of World Press Freedom Day and in supporting these very important bills.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 124) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 124

Whereas, in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 3 of each year as "World Press Freedom Day" to celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom, to evaluate the state of press freedom around the world, to defend the media from attacks on the independence of the media, and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty;

Whereas, according to the International Federation of Journalists, at least 109 journalists and other media workers were killed in 2008 while on assignment;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, nearly 3 out of 4 journalists killed in the line of duty are murdered, and the killers go unpunished in nearly 9 of 10 cases;

Whereas, according to estimates by Reporters Without Borders, in 2008, 673 journalists were arrested, 929 journalists were physically attacked or threatened, and 29 journalists were kidnapped;

Whereas Freedom House reported that press freedom has been declining during recent years in both authoritarian countries and established democracies;

Whereas, reflecting the rise in influence of Internet reporting, an increasing number of online editors, bloggers, and web-based reporters are being imprisoned and their websites closed; and

Whereas press freedom is a key component of democratic governance and socio-economic development and enhances public accountability, transparency and participation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the threats to press freedom and expression around the world, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2009;

(2) commends journalists around the world for the essential role they play in promoting

government accountability and strengthening civil society, despite numerous threats;

(3) pays tribute to the journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty;

(4) condemns all actions around the world that suppress press freedom;

(5) reaffirms the centrality of press freedom to efforts by the United States to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance around the world; and

(6) calls on the President and the Secretary of State to develop means by which the United States Government can more rapidly identify, publicize, and respond to threats against press freedom around the world.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2009

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, May 1; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and that the Senate resume consideration of S. 896, the Helping Families Save Their Homes Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, tomorrow we hope to get to a finite list of amendments on the bill so we can complete action on the legislation early next week.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:15 p.m., adjourned until Friday, May 1, 2009, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

CHARLES A. BLANCHARD, OF ARIZONA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE, VICE MARY L. WALKER, RESIGNED.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate, Thursday, April 30, 2009:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

THOMAS L. STRICKLAND, OF COLORADO, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE.
THE ABOVE NOMINATION WAS APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEE'S COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.